CHAUCER AND POE.

cet, erewhile, whose bold and cheerful voice
Made blithe the uplands of our English song;
Bird of the dawn, whose pipe, jovous and strong,
Hauntstill the air and makes our dreams rejoice;
Be night is come, and a bewildered noise
Frets the dusk-brooding silence, and we long
For the bright hearth with its familiar throng,
aght mirth and mnocent cheer, and attic joys,
where art thou, heavenly birn? Ah! thou art fied
To the celestial gardens in the East,
And ever carosest at their blossoming door.
Sad is the West, and when the light is dead
A raven from the tomo distarbs our feast,
And croaks beside our lattice "nevermore."
F. O.

## AN AMBITIOUS WOMAN.

A NOVEL. BY EDGAR FAWCETT.

athor of "A Gentleman of Leisure," "A Hopeless Case," etc. XV.

But Claire's doubts were soon settled. If that eist did not precisely end them, a few succeeding days forever laid the ghost of her spleen. Mrs. Diggs had been jocundly candid, and that was all. No baleini sarcasms had pulsed beneath her vivacions prophecies. She soon convinced Claire that she was a stanch and loyal confederate.

She often dropped into the Twenty-Eighth Street souse, and praised its appointments warmly Your little reception-room is perfect," she told Clare, " with those dark crimson walls and that miture so covered with big pink roses. I like it mensely, don't you know! I wouldn't bave liked it two or three years ago: I would have thought crimson and pink a weird discord; but fashion gives certain things their stamp; it makes us wake up some morning, and find our nates turned to loves." About the dining-room, on the same floor, and the drawing-room on the floor above, was less genially critical. This or that detail discovered to be " not just quite right, don't you know?" and Clairs in nearly all such cases nged dissent into agreement after a little serious reflection. Some of the resultant alterations in-volved decided expense. This Claire regretted, while she let her husband meur it. Hollister always did so readily enough. Wali Street had rather smiled upon him, of late. A few of his ventures had become bolder, but flattering successes had persistently followed them.

"The theatre is all lit," he said to her one evening. obut the curtain doesn't rise. How is that,

he knew perfectly well what he meant, but shoe to teign that she did not know. They had been surveying together a tew decorative improve ments, recently wrought, in mantel, dade, or even

"I gon't think I follow your metaphor," said Claire. There was the tiny outbreak of a smile at sach corner of her mouth. It struck Hollister, who was standing quite near her, that she looked delightfully prim. He kissed her before he answered. and then, while he did so, let his lips almost graze er ear, saying in an absurd gutteral semitone, as of

melo-dramatic confidence : "I ment that it's time for Act First. Time for the lords and ladies to enter, with a grand flourish of trumpets. Of course, when they do come, they'll all kiss the hand of their charming hostess, just

like this." But she would not let him kess her hand, though be cought it and made the attempt.

"There are no lords and ladies in New York," she mid, laughing and receding from him at the same time. "Aud if they should come, they would never behave to such an old-fashloned style as that,"

But though she treated them lightly, his words fed the fuel of her deep, keen longing. She had made up her mind that Mrs. Diggs had been right. She would never be content to take a low place. Nothing save the highest of all would ever satisfy

At the same time she clearly understood that great sums of money were needed to accomplish any sch end. She spent several days of brooding She had not great soms of money-or rather, Hellister had not. And there a smed slight chance of her husband ever securing them.

The season is dreadfully young yet," said Mrs. Diage to her, the next day, while they sat together. There is simply nothing going on. There are no teas, no receptions, and, of course, no bails. But we'll go and take our drive in the Park. Do hurry

Claire dressed, but not very quiekly. She kept Mrs. Digge waiting at least fifteen minutes. Mrs. Diggs's carriage was also waiting. It was not at all like its owner, this carriage. It was burly and somewhat cumbrons. The silver-harnessed horses that drew it had clipped tails and huge auburn here and there with a tasteful dash of scarlet, as if in pretty chromatic tribute to the violent complexion of "dear Manhattan." When they were rolled side by side together in this easycushioned carriage, Mrs. Diggs said to Claire:

"You kept me waiting a little eternity. I hate to wait. I suppose it's because I'm so nervous. I've been to three or four different doctors about my pervousness. They nearly all say it's a kind of dyspepsia. But that seems to me so ridiculous. Dyspepsia means indigestion, and I can digest a pair of gs-no matter at what hour I should cut it. My dear Claire." (she had got to use this familiar address, of late) "I don't see how you can get on without a maid. That is why you're so slow with your bonnet and wrays; be sure it is. Oh, a maid

"So is a carriage like this " said Claire, smiling. Yes, a carriage is indispensable, too. At least I find it so. You will also, my dear, when you come to pay visits among a large circle of friends."

"I'm afraid that both the maid and the carriage will be out of my reach for a very long time yet, said Claire. "Our taking the house, you know "Oh, your husband is doing finely in Wall Street.

There heard from Manhattan about his brilliant strokes. Manhattan thinks him intensely clever. His success is creating a good deal of talk, I assure

This was true. Hollister would now often laugh and say: "The luck seems to be all on my side, Claire. And I don't take any very fearfu risks. aither, somehow. The money isn't coming in by hundreds, at present; it is coming in by thousands. I'm getting to be a rather important fellow; upon down there are taking me up. A month ago they

Sourcely knew if I existed."
Then he and Claire would talk together of the and that she had forgotten hardly an item of past rmation; her judgments and decisions were times so shrewd that they startled him, conmdering how purely they were based upon theory and hearsay. Once or twice he permitted her secured to away him, though not with her secured ction. The result turned out notably well. He old her what he had done, and why he had done it, after the triumph had been achieved. She was by no means flattered on discovering the faith he had Repeated in her. She even went so far as to markedly chide h'm fer having reposed it.

nember, Herbert," she said, "that I am of sity ignorant regarding these matters, in every practical sense. All my opinions are quite without the value of experience. Please never take dagie share because I venture the expression of an das on sales or purchases. I am proud and glad to hink myself the cause of your having made a lucky Speration; that, of course, I need not tell you.

on into disaster."
Sie reflected, secretly: 'How weak Herbert is! He is no doubt clear and quick of mind, and he is Minst the light-hearted, easy temperament that what he himself calle " nerve on the Street." at how weak he is in his trust of me! Does not show him weak in other ways? Would a man ng nature let his fondness ever so betray his see! I must be gnarded hereafter in my talks din. I really know nothing: I only use his edge to build upon. What he is doing is quarters mere hazard, and the rest eleverness. Plainty that be has begun a very precarious

may win enormonsiy; I am just beginning to ac-cept his chances of doing so. But there must be no balking and thwarting on my part. He would ruis himself, most probably, if I proposed it. He is so weak where I am concerned! Yes, in all such ways he is so weak !" She could not dwell upon the fact of this weak

sired to abet it. She could not help being cold, Besides, he had never offered the faintest objection

victory assumed definite outlines—when she was his wife and the mistress of his household—when

she was sure of sharing his fortunes until death

should end further companionship—than she had been at the hour when he had first asked her to

marry bim. She had a great sense of duty toward

fealty urfulfilled. And this determination, flinch

lessly kept, must stand for him in place of passion.

She had no passion to give him. She had given all that to her dear dead father. If he were alive, now, and dwelling with her, what joy she would have

in putting ber arms about his neck, her lips to his

cheek, and telling him how the hopes whose seed he had sown long ago might soon ripes into spien-

"You tell me that you have new adherents, new

friends," she soon said to her husband. " If any of

them are people of prominence-of the sort I would

wish to know-why do you not ask them here, to

"True enough," said Hollister. "That is an

without their wives."

Claire seemed to meditate, for a slight time.

were the kind of women whom I would be very

that he had arranged a dinner at which some four

gentlemen besides himself were to be present. He

had placed the whole affair to the hands of a

noted restaurateur, who assured him that it should

"It was intended as a little surprise for you," he said. "The men are all of the kind that I am nearly sure you will approve. I mean

they are what is called 'in society.' You see, I am

they are what is called 'in society.' You see, I am getting quite wise with regard to these matters. A few weeks have made a world of difference with me. I am waking up to a sense of who is who. Before, it was all stupid, treadmil sert of work. I cared very little about associates, connections, influence. I wanted to make both ends meet, and found the process arather dull one. Now I am in a wholly different frame of mind. I am beginning to anuse myself as much by the study of men as by the study of stocas. I have several distinct adherents, several more distinct supporters, and one or two would-be patrons. I don't think I was ever unpopular on the Street; I was simply unimportant. But now that I'm important I have got to be quite popular. I dareasy the whole thing is attributable to yourself, Claire. You've pricked me into life. I was torpid till I met and knew you."

She was considerably alarmed about the plan of the dinner-party. She was not at all sure if it would be in good style for Hollister to give it with herself as the only lady present. As soon as errounstances permitted, she hastened to consult with Mrs. Diggs.

"Oh, it's all right," decided the oracle. "You are always certain of being correct formit you do anything like that in company with your husband.

willing to have among my acquaintances." A few days later Hollister announced to Claire

be conducted on the most admirable plan.

did frait!

She means to leave no obligation of wifely

ness with any tender feeling. She had grown to accept his love as something so natural and ordinary that specould coldly survey as a flaw any point in its devotion which verged upon indiscreet ex struck her that she was very cold toward her husband. But no pang of conscience accom-panied the realization. She had disguised nothing from Herbert. He knew precisely what she wished to do. He even sympathized with her aim, and de-

to her coldness. He evidently wanted her to be just as she was. And moreover, she was no different at this hour, when the possibility of a great social

had some unpleasant purpose in wanting me to visit her."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Diggs. "you never suggested such a thing before!"

Claire had grown very grove and calm again.

"Did I not!" she said. "Well, I had supposed it. It was a sort of fanc."

Mrs. Diggs took one of Claire's hands and held it, at the same time giving her an intent look.

"You're keeping something from me," she said.

"Yes, Claire. I know you are... Did Beverley Thurston ever ask you to to marry hims!"

Claire colored to the roots of her rich-tinted tresses. She vii-d to draw her hand away, but Mrs. Diggs still retained it.

"He did!" exclumed her friend. "Your complexion teils me so! Everything is explaned now. You remsed Beverley. Yes, my dear, you remsed him. And she somehow get wind of it. Perbaps Beverley teild, or pernaps his complexion, like yours, divulged secrets, don't you know! ... And yet, on second theught, Beverley's complexion could do nothing so expressive; it is too battered and world-worn; is capatointy for blushing is entirely nuil. ... No, he told her. And she has not forgiven you, and never will. Her monstrous oride would not permit her to do so. I understand ev rything, now. You remember what I tood you about her clannish feeling—how she loves to quietly exalt her family name! ... Ah, my dear Claire, you have committed, in her eves, the great unpardonals esin. I was right; I felt it to be in the air that you and she would prove enemies. I begin to think myself a sort of haphazaid sibyl; I divined what would happen, and it has na; peecel. You have presumed to refuse her brother, and Cornelia knows it. Prepare to be crushed."

Claire ig ity tossel her graceful head, and her lip curied a little as she did so.

"I am not at all prepared to be crushed," soe said. "Mrs. Van Horo bassooled our prospective dineer party, as regards ladies, but she has not spoiled me."

"Delightful!" declared Mrs. Diggs, softly clapping her hands. "Tant's the spirit I like to see.

idea." And then, with beaming hesitation, he added: "But I thought you would not want them "I should not want them without their wives," she presently said, "unless I felt sure that their wives led me."
Delightful !" declared Mrs. Diggs, softly clap-

ping her hands. "That's the spirit I like to see.
The fight has begun; it's going to be serious. But
remember that I am always your de oted auxiltary."

Delightful Toward and Jack The Spirit I like to see. The figst has begun; it's going to be serious. But remember that I am always your de-oted anxiliary?"

The dinner took blace. There were no ladies present except Claire hereelf. It was an extremely elegant dinner. Claire rose when coffee was being served, and left the gentlemen together. She neaformed her annided office of hostess, as it were, with singular charm and dignity. And during the progress of the dinner she made a riend.

This was Mr. Stuart tholdwin. Everybody in Wall Street knew 8 soart Goldwin. He had drifted into that at rany region of risk about four years ago. He had so drifted from a remote New England town, and his speculative successes had been pusnomenal. He was reputed to be worth, at present, a good many millions of dellars. He had acquired an enormous influence shough his conditionries; he was the reigning Wall Street King. But he had note of the vulgarity which had marked a few of his immediate predecessors; he had always shown a full appreciation of his revailty and the duties resultant from it. He had been admitted, with singular promothess into the secal holy of holes; he was hand in glove with what are termed the best people; he belonged to three or four of the most select clubs; the circle of acquaintances had rapidly become hare. Women liked him as much as men. He was personally the type of man woom withen like. His frame was tall and imbosing; he wore a large tawny in a sache, which drooped with slike eyes were large, and of a soft, glasening holes. His ago was about forty years, out he mig it have passed for considerably younger. Books and not ted his rapid and distinctive intelligence, for ne had not time to read them; and yet he had campit the reverberation, as it were, of the best and newest writers.

Claire thought him delichiful. He, in turn, thought her even more toan this. She was a necovery to him. He had never married, and news to had with goin with any holes of the to whom he paid court.

Claire found herself vain, in

"Oh, it's all right," decided the oracle. "You are always certain of being correct form it you do anything his that in company with your husband. But, my dear Ciairs, it is too bad that you couldn't find three more ladies besides yourself and me. You see, I invite myself, provisionally, so to speak. Isn't it dreadful of me? But then I take such an interest in you that I want to be present, don't you know, at the laying of your corner-stone. Mannatian ought to be asked, too, dear tellow; it's cliquette, don't you know? But then you need not mind, this once."

"I wish that I knew three more ladies," said Claire, thoughtfully. "I wish that I knew three more ladies," said Claire, thoughtuliv.

"Yes that would make a dinner of just ten. A dinner of ten is so charming. Mr. Hollister wouldn't object, would he?"

Claire quickly shook her head. "Oh!" she said, "Herbert never objects."

It was so seriously spoken that Mrs. Diggs broke into one of her most mutinous laughs. "How deficious!" she exclaimed. "What a superb conjugativity vou condense in one demur little epistram!

Well, if 'Herbert,' as you say, 'never objects,' there is let me see there is Corneha Van Horn."

"Would she come if I asked her?" said Claire.

Goldwin had not deceived her. She read him with lucid insight. She saw him to be impostingly superficial; she perceived him to be a man whose polished filigrees would ring hollow at so much as one sincere tap of the finger-nail. He was agreeable to her, but not admirable; he cantivated but he did not dazzle her. She compared him with Beverley Thursion (never tainking to compare him with her hasband) and noted all the more clearly his lack of gouine and noted all the more clearly his lack of gouine and noted all the more clearly his lack of gouine and noted all the more clearly his lack of gouine and noted all the more clearly his lack of gouine and noted all the more clearly his lack of gouine and further form the wine he had taken, but with no unbecoming anguestion of excess. "You haven't asked her, so of courses to adon't know. Nobody can ever predicate anjud and count Cornella. But considering how arrad the state of the

flushed from the wine he had taken, but with no unbecoming suggestion of excess.

"I couldn't stay away from you," he said, sinking into a happy, half-lounging postore on the so a a her side. He was faulilessly dressed, in garments that seemed to accept every send of his fine-moulded figure without a wrinkle of their dark, flexible surface. "Your husband smokes the nicest sort of cigar, but he has another possession that seems to me vastly sincerior." Then he broke into a mellow laugh, and waved one hand hither and thither, with an air of mock explanation. "I allude to this beautiful little drawing-room," he continued.

Continued.

His mirthful sidelong look made Claire echo his laugh. "I will teil Herbert how much you icke it, she said; "he will he so pleased to know." "Pray do nothing of the sort!" he exposiniated "Pray do nothing of the sort: he exposinated with a good deal of comic seriousness. "I should never forgive you if you did. Husbands are such outly jealous fellows. There is no telling what innocent little outburst of esteem may sometimes offend them."

offend them."
Claire thought the time had come for a decisive Claire thought the time had come for a decisive parry, in the parlance of fencers. "On. Herbert is not at all jeasons," she said, measuring the words just enough not to make them seem discordant with her bright soile. "He has never had the least occasion to be, I assure you."

He fixed bis eyes with soft intentness on her sweet, blooming face. "Never?" he questioned, quite low of tone.

"Never," she answered, gently laconic. "Suth be might take some stand prefect. , who

"Never" she answered, gently laconic.

"But he might take some stupid pretext knows?"

whows to one of the did I would soon show him the stu-pidity of it. We understand each other excel-lently. They talked on for at least a half hour. The other They talked on for at least a half hour. The other gentlemen remained below. Goldwin made no more daring complimentary hazards. He listened quite as much as he talked. Their converse turned upon social matters—upon what sort of a season it would be—upon the coming opera—upon the nature of New York entertainments—upon the men and women who were to give them. Claire made it very plais to him that she wanted to enter the gay lists. She at length said:

"Do you know Mrs. Van Horn?"

"Goldwin laug od. "Why don't you ask me if I know the City Hall," he said, "or the Stock Exchange? Of course I know her."

"Do you tike her?"

"Nobody ever likes her. Who likes statues?"

"People sometimes worship them."

"Oh, she is a good deal worshiped, if you mean that."

that."

Hollister and his two remaining gnests now appeared. Claire re-welcomed both the latter gentlemen with beaming suavity. They were both important personages, as it has been recorded. They both had important wives, to whom they repaired, a little later, and to whom they loudly sang praises of Claire's loveliness. The remarks of each took substantially the same form, and the following might be given as their connubial and somewhat florid average:

"That fellow Hollister's wife, you know." that.

substantially the same form, and and somewhat florid average:

"That fellow Hollister's wife, you know. The man I dued with to-night. Didn't know he had a wife! Well, you'd have known it if you'd been there. She's a splendid young creature. Handsome as a picture, and good style, too. By the way, Stuart Goldwin was there; you know how hard it is to get kim. I shouldn't wonder if these Hollisters were going to make a dash for society, soon. Now, don't repeat it, my dear, but the fact is, this Hollister can be of considerable service to me in a business way. There's no use of going into particulars, for women sever understand business. But. . if anything should occur—any card he left, I mean, you may be sure what my wishes are. . Oh, of course; look sour, and refuse point blank. Bless my soul, when did you ever do anything to help along my interests? You'll spend the money fast enough, but you won't turn a hand to help me make it. All right; do as you please, Hollister is to-day the most rising young man on the Street. There's a regular boom on him. He's got Goldwin for a friend. You must know what that means."

myself that I swung it rather well. I told ber that you had given her a perfect right to levite you. I told her that she had treate, you with unusual courtesy, and that instead of leaving a slip of neodered, to my thinking, the civility a fasking her to dinner. Mocover, I added, the fact of your brother having been her most intimate friend had readered, to my thinking, the civility a still more kindly and see une one. A mocover, I added, the fact of your brother having been her most intimate friend had readered, to my thinking, the civility a still more kindly and see une one. A mocover, I added, the fact of your brother having been her most intimate friend had readered, to my thinking, the civility a still more kindly and see une one.

"You must cave made her never angry" said.

"You must cave made her never angry." said.

"You had a vary effort had a white heat. She could so constitutionally placed and chil. She repited that you had no naily attemptes 'to ofter her patronage, and that your effort had annows her any on the said.

"Did she say that?" questioned Claire, with a certain interview, held by stuart Goldwin with a certain lady of his acquain ance, was of units of the conditions of the conditions of the conditions of the conditions of the condition of the

ness which may exis between a queen and a indiniwating. Apert from this, she was a social dignitary. Her arificiality was more bainly manifest than that of Goldwin, and it had become a commonplace among her friends to say that she was affected. But she had made her affectation a kind of fashion; other women had so liked the peculiar flutter of her lids, the drawl of her voice, the errate movements and extraordinary poses of her body, that they had imitated these with disastrous tidelity. She said clever, daring, inselect or amiable things all in the same slow, measured way, and generally managed to leave an impression that a fund of unuttered experience or observation lay before them. She was prodigiously prous for one of her pleasure-loving nature. Her charity was liberal and incessant. She traited her Parisian robes through the war is of hospitals or littled them in the ill-smelling manuts of hospitals or littled them in the ill-smelling manuts of our papers. Her religion and her charity went hand in hand. For some people they were both shams; for others they were ostendation, buff formed unor sincerity; log others they mere daried unor sincerity; log others they mere an intexestion, and skill for others they were an intexestion, and skill for others they were an intexestion, moniform in the moniform of the moniform of the formed upon it no less darkly than her kinswoman, Mrs. Van Horn, but for a different reason. Its occasional lapses into rationalistic and unorthedox thought rouse her dismay and tree.

"Science," she would say, in her grave, lottering manner, is pericely spiendid. I adore it. I read books about it all the time." (There were those who roundly asserted that she did not know protopiasm from evolution.) "But this confusing it with religion is simply blapshemous and awful. I have the profounces pity for all wno do not believe devonity. I wish I could build aspitums for them, and visit them, as I do my sick and my poor? Goldwin always listended to the would never lave gain seed herself on the cac

"Hmensely. There was only one woman, but a marvellous woman. She is Hollister's wife. I feel as it i'd been hearing a new opera by Gounod. Mrs. Lee was watching the speaker's face with

alls. Lee was watening the speakers face with great intenthiess. It was a face that she knew very well; she had given it several years of close study. "She is handsome, then?" "She's exquisite. She is going to take things by storm this winter. She wants to do it, too. And I

mean to help her."

"Who was shef"
"I don't know. And I don't care. I'm her devoted friend. I hope you will be. I want you to call on "Are you crazy?" said Mrs. Lee. She said it so quietly and slowly, as was her wont to say all things, that she might have been making the most

"Yes." laughed Goldwin, "quite out of my Do you think I will go and see a woman I don't "Do you think I will go and see a woman tool' know, merely because you ask me to don't?" rie let his eyes dwell steadily upon her pale, small, piqua it face, lifted above the long, rounded throat, on which sparkled a slim gorget of rubies, to match her dress.

"You've done things that I wanted you to do before now," he said softly. "You'll do his, I am

She put one hand on his arm. The hand was so they and white that it seemed to rest there as lightly as a driffed blossom. Will you tell me all about ner I" she said, in her measured way.

"I told you that I couldn't describe her. She's like flowers that I've seen; she's like muste that I ve heard; she is like perfumes to at I have smelt. There's poetry for you. You're fond of poetry, you say."

say."
Sue still kept her hand on his arm. He had very

She still kept her hand on his arm. He had very rarely praised a woman to be hearing. He had never before praised one in this fashion.

"Will you tell me one thing more!" she said.

"Have you failen in love with her!"

Goldwin threw back his head and laughed.

"Good neavens!" he exclaimed, "she is a married woman, and her busband worships her."

"Will you answer my question!" persisted Mrs.

Lee. "Yes," said Goldwin, suddenly jamping up from the lounge. "She is tremendonsly food of her hus-band. There . . . your question is answered." XVI.

Rather early the next moraing, Mrs. Diggs dropped in upon Claire, "to hear all about it," as she said, alinding to the dinner-party.

She dismissed two of the gentlemen with two lit-

tle contemptuous nods. "They are both well enough in point of respectability," she affirmed. So are their wives. All four are so swathed in dull convention that you even forget to criticise them; they're like animals which resemble the haunts they inhabit to such a degree that you can tell them from the surrounding foliage or furrowsonly when they move or show life. Whom else did you have?" " There was Mr. Stuart Goldwin," said Claire.

"Goldwin? You don't mean it, really? Did you have Goldwin?" Here Mrs. Diggs looked hard at Claire, and slowly shook her head. "My dear," she went on, "it must make the better that your husband is achieving great financial distinction. Partion my saying it, Claire, but Goldwin wouldn't have put his limbe under your mahogany if this had not been true. He's an enormous personage. Other Wall Street grandees have been very small pygmies in the social estimate. But Goldwin carries everything before him. You needn't tell me that you like him. It would be something abnormal if you didn't. He is really the most charming of men. You can't trust him, don't you know further than you can see him; he bristies with all sorts of humbug. And yet you accept him, because it is such well-bred, engaging humbug. He has hosts of adherents, and be deserves them. He gives the most enchanting entertainments. They are never vulgar, and yet they cost vast sums. For example, he will give a Delmonico dinner, at which every lady finds diamond-studded locket hid modestly in the heart of her bouquet. I need not add that in a matri-

monial way he is simply grovelled to. But beware of him, my dear Claire; he is dangerous."

"Dangerous ?" reseated Claire. "Well, not so much in himself, Goldwin, in himself, is a shallow yet clever man, a forcible yet weak man, a man whose pluck has aided him a good deal, and whose luck has aided him still more. He has caught the trick of looking like a prince, and hence of giving his princely amassment of money a superb glamour. He will fade, some day, and leave not a rack behind. Of course he will. They all do. I don't know that he would it he married. And now I come to my previous point. He doesn't marry; I come to my previous point. He doesn't marry;

"I don't follow you," Clarre said.
"He doesn't marry Mrs. Ridgeway Loe.
"He doesn't marry Mrs. Ridgeway Loe.
That is what I mean. As it is, she guards his approaches. Sae is a woman of high position, considerable queer, incanny beauty, mo strous affectation, and a foundmest for him that amounts to idoletry. He doesn't mean to he had been to he had b

The opera was a favorite one; a famed and favor

beautiful, and a good many people, before an hour had passed, had looked at her with the closest kind of scrittiny.

The opera was a favorite one; a famed and favorite prima-donna sang in it. Below, where the real lovers of music mostly througed. Claire's presence produced neither comment nor criticism. But up in the region sacred to fashion, mattention, gossip and firtation, she rapidly became an even which even the most melodious cavarina was powerless to supersede.

It was not all done by her beants and novel charm. Hollister, sitting at her side, nonchalant, handsome, of excellent conventional style in garb and posture, materially helped to uncrease the notability which surrounded her. His success had publicly transpired; a few of those newspapers which are little save glaring personal placards had of late preclaimed with grappic zeal his speculative triumphs. He had leapt into notoriety in a day, almost in an hour. There was but one man in the house besides her husband whom Claire knew. This man was Sturt Goldwin, and he soon dropped into her box, remaining there through the two final acts. Hotister meanwhile chose to be absent. He had found some friends who were solicitous of presenting him to certain ladies. He spenting with himself than with Claire, Perhaps with him livas even more so, since he obtained his notical acceptance, as it were, by great dames whom he pleased with his handsome face, happy manners and growing repute as a potential millionnaire.

His wife, on the other hand, had gained a different victory. She was pronounced to be charming and remarkable; she had acquired the presige of Goldwin's open attentions. But she was a woman, and she had not yet received the endorsement of her own sex. It might be withheld: there was still no actual certainty.

Claire loved the music, but she would have heard its cadences in discontent if fate had decreed that she should sit, this evening, with no att

last see and judge for themselves. The verdict is sure."

He said many more things in this same vein, all utered low, and all accompanied by his smile, that seemed either to mean volumes or to leave his true meaning adroitly ambiguous.

Mrs. Ridgeway Lee was in a somewhat near box. When Goldwin returned to her side, just as the curtain was falling on the last act, she accepted his escort to her carriage with a fine composure. He met Mrs. Van Horu, a little later, in the crush that always occurs along the Fourteenth Street lobby when a full house disgorges its throng.

The two ladies talked together. Not far away from them stood Mrs. Diggs and Claire, each waiting for an absent husband to secure her carriage.

"What a contrast there is between them," Claire murmured to her companion. "One is so blonde and peaceful, the other so dark and restless?"

"Yes, my dear Claire. Have you caught Cornelia's eye?"

"No. She does not appear to see me."

"She sees you perfectly. She has not yet inade up her mind just now to act."

"I think that she means to cut me," said Claire, under her breath

the the emphatic answer, so b

has told me hundreds of charming things about you."

"Our acquaintance has been a very short one," said Claire, looking at Mrs. Diggs. In a certain way, she sought to gain a kind of tacit cue from the latter's face. She failed to perceive just how matters were drifting. Was this patronage on the part of both ladies? Or was it meant for irreproachable courtesy?

Mrs. Diggs gave a laugh. "Goldwin can say a hundred charming things very easily on a brief acquaintance." she declared. "Can't you?" were her next words, delivered to Goldwin himself, who had just then slipped up to the group.

"Oh, no, I can't." he at once replied, "unless I mean every one of them."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Diggs, "how quickly you grasp the situation! So you heard what we were talking about, did you! You've found out that we were discussing your last enthusiasm?"

"Ah." said Goldwin, "I have very few of them. Don't cheapen me, please, in the regard of Mrs. Hollister."

"You seem to count upon her regard with singular

"Ah." said Goldwin, "I have very few of them. Don't cheapen me, please, in the regard of Mrs. Hollister."

"You seem to count upon her regard with singular confidence," said Mrs Van Horn.

"That's entirely our affair," laughed Goldwin. He looked at Claire, but while he did so Mrs. Van Horn placed her hand within his arm. She took it for granted that her carriage had been properly summoned by the financier, and she was going to permit him to accompany her thither, as she had permitted him to find it; she nearly always put herself in the attitude of permitting favors and not soliciting them, by some deft, secure art, quite her own. The how of fareweil which she gave Claire was handsomely suave. Mrs. Lee moved away at her other side. Mrs. Lee had been her guest, that evening, and they were to ride home together.

"So, Claire, it's settled," presently and Mrs. Diggs. "Cornelia is to know you. So is Sylvia Lee, Be careful of them both. I can't feel certain, yet, of exactly what it all means... Here's than dear Manhatian of mine. He has got our carriage. Shall I remain with you till your husband reappears!

Very well; I will. But the is in op lace in which to talk over the whole odd, interesting thing. I'll try and drop in upon you soon; possibly to-morrow, if I can manage it... Does Manhatian see us? Just observe how stipidly he stares everywhere but here. He's been a little strange and absent-minded all the evening. I really think he's forgotten where he left me. He smokes too many of those strong, horrid cigars, don't you know? I truly believe that they cloud his brain half the time... but then it's better he should smoke too much than drink too much. I dou't know wast I should do if the dear fellow drank too much!"

Mrs. Diggs did present herself at Claire's house on the following day. But Claire was not at home. She had driven out in company with her husband. It was a momentous drive. They had left home together at about I o'clock. Claire had no idea whither they were going, at first. Hollister had chosen to ass

doubted fact.

"I will accompany you blindly," she said, just before they entered the carriage. "I suppose, however, there are some more jewels at Tifiany's which you want me to see and choose from."

"No," said Hollater, shaking his head. "I

you want me to see and choose from."

"No." said Holinter, shaking his head. "I shouldn't spend nearly a whole day away from Wall Street for anything of that sort."

The carriage had soon passed Tiffany's by a considerable distance, in what we call the downward direction. As its progress increased, Claire's curiodity heightened, but for some time site gave no proof of this. Her talk was of their new attainments, of their growing pastimes, pleasares, and incurres. She spoke often with a slightly unfamiliar speed; it was a little habit that of late had come upon her; it betrayed gentle excitement in place of arevious composure. To Hollister, when he observed it at all, the effect was filled with charm; he no more disliked it than he would have disliked to see a very tender breeze lightly agitate some beautiful bloom. But his gravity by ne means less-ned under the spell of Claire's rather voluble advances. She bad plainly seen the change; on a sudden she berself became serious as he; then, after an interval of almost complete silence, she placed her hand in his. The carriage was now very near to one of the Brooklyn ferries. No doubt the first real suspicion of the iruth had flashed through Claire's mind when she abruptly said:

"Wuere are we going, Herbert? You really must tell me."

He met her intent look; she had rarely seen his

she abruptly said:

"Where are we going, Herbert? You really must tell me."

He met her intent look; she had rarely seen his bilithe eyes more solemn than now.

"Haven't you guessed by this time?' he said.

"Perhaps I have," she answered. Her tone was a low murmur; she had averted her eyes from his, and would have withdrawn from him feer hand, had not the clasp of his own softly rebelled against the act. Her cheeks had flushed almost crimson. "Go on," she persisted. "Tell me if I am right."

"I think you are, Claire; I think you have guessed it, at last." The carriage had just entered the big gate way of the ferry; wheels and boofs took a new sound as they struck the planks of the wharf. "Dou't you remeaber that night at the Island, a little while after our sugagement, when you told me that it would give you such joy to regain your father's body and to have it decently buried, in a Christian way?"

"Yes, Herbert. . I remember." She spoke the words so faintly that he scarcely heard them.

"Well, Claire. I made you a promise, then, and I recollected the promise."

"But I forgot it!" she oried, throwing both arms about his neck, for an instant, and kissing his cheek. Immediately afterward she barst into tears. "Oh, Herbert, you remembered and I forgot! How wicked of me! I let other things—things that were trifles and vanities—drive it from my mind! Poor, dear, deaf Father! He would never have done that to me! He loved me too well.—far too well!"

The tears were rushing down her face, and her frame was in a miserable tremor. Already he had

mind! Poor, dear, dead rather. He would never have done that to me! He loved me too well—far too well:"

The tears were rushing down her face, and her frame was in a miserable tremor. Already he had caught both her hands, and was firmly pressing them while he bent toward her, and while also leaned in a relaxed posture against the back of the carriage. He shought her repectance as exquisite as it was needless; he held it as only a freeh proof of her sweet, relined aparti. It brought the mist into his sight, and made his voice throb very anwontedly, to see her weep and tremble thus.

"My darling," his next words hurried, "you're not in the least to blame. You would have thought about it a little later, I'm certain. But so much has happened since our marriage, you knew. Besides, what you call trifes and vanities are just what he wanted you to think about. He must be glad (if the dead are ever glad or sorry in any way) to see you climb higher, and get the natice and influence you deserve. You never elighted his memory at all. Dou't fancy you did Claire. He was in your mind all the while, only you postponed speaking of his a little longer than you intended. You had told me what to do, don't you see, and you felt a certain security as regarded my doing it. That was all. Now do cheer up, Greenwood after we have the ferry. Everyting ferenwood after we have the ferry. Everyting has been done, quietly, dear, without your knowning. I thought it would pain you too much to stand beside any open grave of his. The body was not hard to find. You recollected its... its number, you hard to find. You recollected its... its number, you hard to find. You recollected its... its number, you hard to find. You recollected its... its number, you hard to find. You recollected its... its number, you hard to find. You recollected its... its number, you hard to find. You recollected its... its number, you hard to find. You recollected its... its number, you hard to find. You recollected its... its number, you hard to find. You recollected i

grew perfectly calm again, some time before